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## BROTHER HARKLINS; OR, CHANGING PLACES.

BY MRS. JAMES D. CHAPLIN.

There appeared one day, at the study of

an eminent minister, an aged Negro,

most of whose life had been spent in

bondage, but who was now rejoicing in

liberty and introduced himself as Brother

Harkliss Jones, from Sou Caliny."

The good minister shivered at the thought

of another clerical beggar for church

money, to be spent, as so much of it usually

is, in the traveling expenses of the

applicant. "Well, Brother Harkliss,"

he asked, with patient kindness, "what

can I do for you?" "You can listen to

me, brudder," replied Harkliss, with a

pencil air.

"I'll do that if you'll be short; but my

time is very precious, brother," answered

the pastor.

"So is mine, brudder!" exclaimed the

visitor, with a dignity which almost

shamed the minister. "You and I's both

servants of de King, and His business

always 'quires haste."

"Yes; and your church wants a little

help, I suppose, after the war. Well,

I'm glad they sent a sensible man for

it."

"No, sir. My church is the church

Universal, and dat has got de Mighty

One of Jacob for her help, and coudn't

go beggin' of nobody! I come to give and

not to ask sir."

"Then you've got some money for my

church, I suppose," said the minister,

smiling.

"No, sir, what I've got to give will

come either home to you than to your

church."

"Well, what have you to give me

then?"

"A little advice and a heap of comfort.

I come up from my old home 'cause my

chil'n and gran'chil'n was bound for

come. I was an ar de Lord on de banks

of de Great Pedee as I ever 'spect to be

up here; and dere was many spects to

save dere dere, as dere is up here. But

young folks, you know, is songmerry (sanguine) in dere views, and mighty strouful

in carryin' on 'em. Dey got a notion

—poor things—that every foot of land up

North was sanctified by Mr. Lincoln's

spirit, and dat de 'arth yielded like it

did afore de cuss fell on it—widout 'lab-

or or sweat! Dey thought de North

was a little heaven whar no man had

say to his neighbor, 'I love ye de Lord,

'kase dey all loved Him a ready. I told

'em dere dere was work and poverty and

sin up here, like dere was down home; for

I've seen Northern folks plenty in my

young days, and mighty hard ones dey

was too! But my chile's dey-phoeat me,

and said 'mong den's den, 'Daddy,' he

'hind de times. If we goes he'll soon fol-

low."

Now dey was right dere, for nex' to de

Lord, I loves my chile'n and gran'chil'n.

When I see dey was coming! I packed up

my bundle and come too. I 'peared like

I saw a great shinin' finger in de dark

cloud one night pointin' due north.

'Den' say I, 'dat's my pillar of fire, and

where I'm sent I'll go, and de Lord will

have my work all hid out ready for me.'

So here I be, sir."

"And you want me to set you to

work?"

"Not a bit of it, sir; on de contrary I

wants to set you to work! Dat's what I

come here for this mornin'."

The cool composure of the sable guest

fairly astonished the gentleman used to

so much deference and respect; and he

asked in a tone of surprise, "What do you

mean, brother?"

"Well, I've been to hear you preach

two Sunday's and I've made up my mind

dat you're off de track. You talks like it

was a chance anyhow, whether we saints

gets to heaven after all. Dere was too

many 'ifs' in your sermon. De master

hadn't no 'ifs' in His preachin'. His

gospel is, 'He dat believes shall be saved.'

'Him dat comes I will in no wise

cast out.' 'Come unto Me, you dat is

tired and heavy laden, and I give you

rest.' 'Dere is no condemnation to dem

dat are in Christ Jesur.' Whar I am

dere shall My people be also.' 'I give

eternal life unto as many as My Father

give Me, and none shall pluck dem out of

My hands.' Isn't dat good gospel, sir?"

"Yes, and I believe every word of it,"

replied the minister.

"Is dere any chance, think you, for

Satan to slip in by a trick, and upset de

de great work of redemption?"

"No."

"Den why don't you tell de people so?

One sermon of 'you'n' is tellin' all 'bout

de doubts Satan pushes into de hearts of

de Lord's people. Why, dat sermon was

mor'n half 'devil' all through! and an-

other was tellin' de saints dat dey must do

dis and dat and t'other, to get peace and

comfort here and heaven beyond. If you

believes dat Christ died and rose again,

and dat 'kase He lives we shall live also,

why don't you comfort God's people wid

dese words? I rises every mornin' in

Christ, and I walks and talks wid Him

all day. When night comes I lies down

and sleeps wid Him, like it was my last

sleep, and I mought wake next mornin'

wid Him in glory!"

"I'm black and poor and old to de eyes

of de world; but I'm fair and rich

and fresh in His sight, 'kase I'm in

Him. All dat He has got is mine, and

dere ain't a king on arth dat old Harkless

would change places wid. No, no, no!"

"But while you never doubt God's

power to save, you sometimes have doubt

of your acceptance wid Him, haven't

you?" asked the minister, who was, by

this time, seated meckly taking his les-

son.

"No, never; why should I? Dere was a

night once, long time ago, when my son

was 'feedin' sorrowful, like de Master's

when He was in de garden. I felt like I was

helpless for dis life, and I had no light on

de world beyond. I hated my hard

mess, and I most hated God too, for not

giving me a better lot. I was out in de

cane brake all alone, a mile away from any

livin' creatur. I felt like I wanted to kill

myself 'kase my massa be done gone and

sold my wife and baby! Dat ar night I

got a hint in my soul what hell was; and

as I sat dere a thought come into me and

I spoke it out. 'Dere ain't no God,'

says I. And dem words skeert me so I

sprung right off de ground, whar I was